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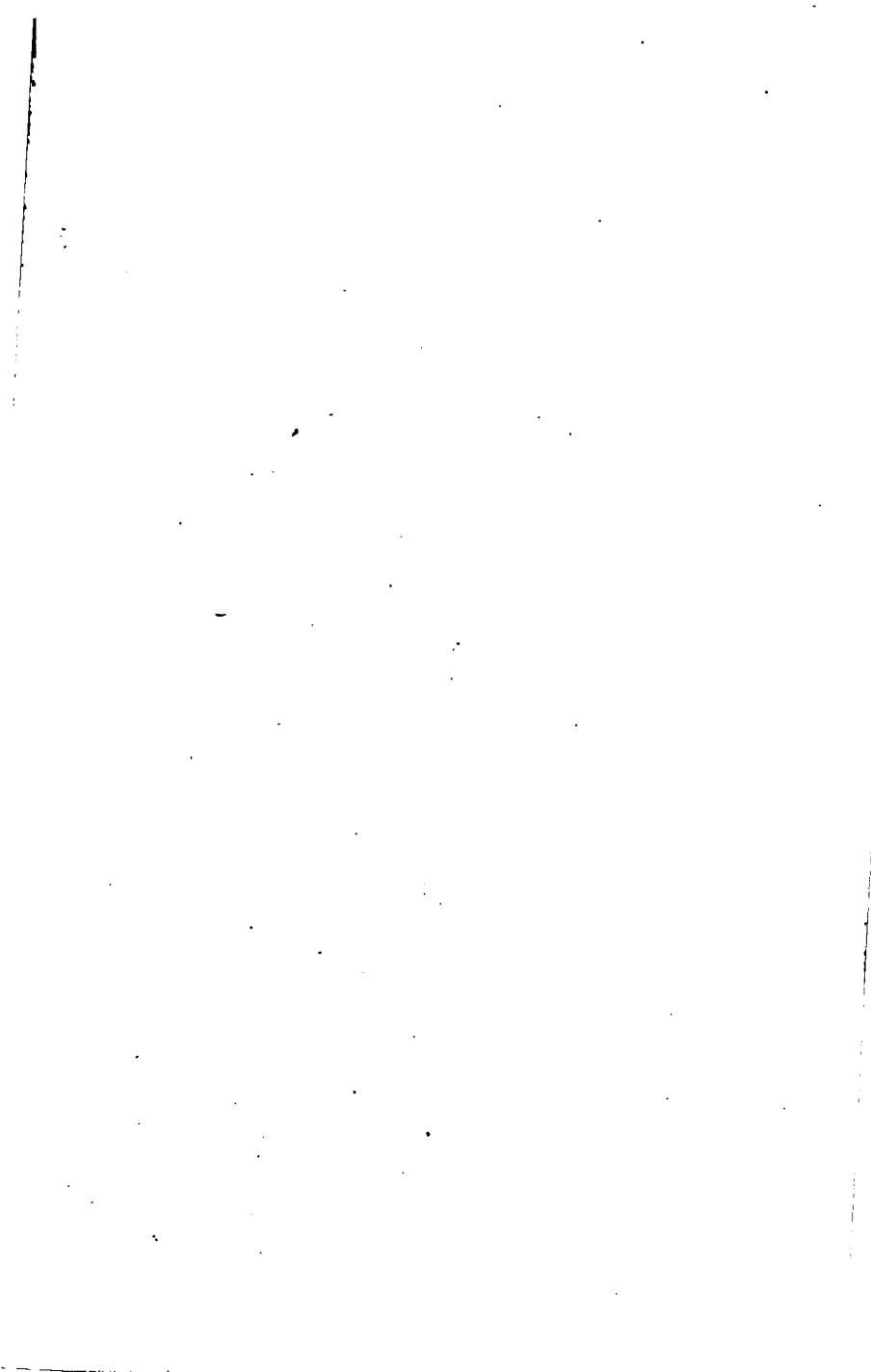
T H E

A R T

OF DELIVERING

Written Language.

710





*"We must seek it in more
rational institutions."*

Published as the Act directs by W.Hodgson, Newgate, Oct. 1, 1795.

THE
A R T
OF DELIVERING
Written Language;
OR, AN
E S S A Y
ON
R E A D I N G.

IN WHICH THE SUBJECT IS TREATED
PHILOSOPHICALLY
AS WELL AS WITH A VIEW
TO
P R A C T I C E.

[William Cockin]

L O N D O N :
PRINTED BY H. HUGHES,
FOR J. DODSLEY, IN PALL-MALL.

M.DCC.LXXV.

Bates
Book Worm
2:21-46
54" 47

T O

DAVID GARRICK,
ESQUIRE.

S I R,

IT was with no small diffi-
dence the author of the fol-
lowing pages requested your opi-
nion of their merit. As they
ventured to call in question the
accuracy of some ideas and prin-

A 3 ciples

U 2-23-46 T. 1.

vi D E D I C A T I O N.

ciples in an art which has hitherto been thought perfectly well understood, he was afraid, that how fully soever he himself might be satisfied of the truth of his reasoning, it would not so easily meet with the approbation of superior judges. You have however removed all his fears of this kind, by assuring him, that the doctrine laid down in the following essay, agrees exactly with your own sentiments, and that on more accounts than one it merits the notice of the ingenious. Regard for the delicacy of the public
ear

DEDICATION. vii

ear obliges him to suppress the rest of your acknowledgements in its favour. But, that the pleasure they yield may not appear unaccompanied with proper gratitude, he begs leave to dedicate his little work to You; a compliment, which he owns could have no meaning in it, were it not possible to shew our gratitude where we make on return for an obligation. And to acknowledge the whole truth with respect to the freedom of this address, he must candidly add, that besides the particular

A 4 just



viii D E D I C A T I O N.

just mentioned, and the honour of such public countenance, he has another motive more nearly connected with the design of the essay. He has said *, that it would answer one principal view in this publication, should it incite the ingenious to a more critical investigation of the precepts of the necessary, polite, and neglected art of which he treats ; and he could not possibly have hoped for a circumstance more favourable to this end, than the sanction of a name

* Vide Preface.

DEDICATION. ix
so conspicuous in the world of
elegant learning, and so univer-
sally allowed one of the first
judges of propriety in every
branch of oral delivery.

He has the honour to be, with
the greatest respect,

Your much obliged,

and most obedient

humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

P R E-



P R E F A C E.

THE essay here humbly offered to the public is an attempt to discover the rational principles and rules of an art, on which indeed pens of every denomination have been occasionally exercised,—though, as it appears to the author, very few of them with the attention the undertaking deserves, and none with the success which might have been expected from their superior abilities. The subject is in truth not one of the easiest, and to treat it in a full and philosophical manner requires a species of investigation which every one has not a requisite

requisite share of patience and industry to carry on and complete. The author therefore having for some time imagined the rules for reading hitherto given not only greatly imperfect but in some particulars very faulty, was induced to undertake a cursory analysis of the art, and to endeavour to erect its leading principles on a more rational and extensive foundation. And though the union of precept and example is certainly the most perfect and efficacious method of instruction, yet he has not taken much pains to illustrate what he has advanced by apposite instances; as such a plan would not only have carried him beyond the limits of his intended brevity, but also have loaded his principles with an incumbrance, which, in case they were to prove unable to resist the attacks of impartial criticism, would only
have

have increased the magnitude of their ruin. On this account likewise he has omitted several corroborating arguments and illustrations which the subject naturally suggests when attentively considered. To naked precepts and general abstract reasoning therefore, the author has chiefly confined his views; and he hopes that where he is not perfectly clear and intelligible this circumstance will now and then furnish an apology;—though he is conscious, that more frequently the reason will be what he cannot so easily shift from himself. However, that the plan thus limited might be as generally understood as possible, he has, for the sake of the less experienced reader, occasionally entered into such collateral disquisitions as he thought would tend to give him a still more enlarged view of the subject, or impress on his mind such

such ideas as might be often convenient to refer to by way of analogy.

The advantages to be received from a proper management of such speculative enquiries as this, are some of them perhaps not so evident as they are valuable. It is pretty notorious, that to taste and natural genius we owe the most considerable improvements ever made in the polite arts, and that these directors not only often supersede all studied rules, but also sometimes outgo every conception of the best instructed mind. Hence the actual improvement which the practice of these arts derives from theory, though often considerable, is perhaps but of inferior consequence to that peculiar pleasure we receive in contemplating their performances, when we are well acquainted with their established rules, and
find

find them faithfully and judiciously observed. Here whatever native taste discovers this recognition improves, and their coincidence, like the harmony of meeting truths, affects the soul with some of its most flattering and agreeable emotions. It appears therefore, in short, that works of this nature may at least be of as much service in teaching us to perceive as to execute, and that they propose to encrease the number of sources from whence we derive our pleasure, as well as to add to the quantity of their streams.

After the above declaration and apology the author has only to add here, that as, on the one hand (like those who have gone before him) he does not expect to be found free from error and imperfection, so, on the other, he hopes that several of his
remarks

remarks on the subject will appear to be as just, as they are new, and that his manner of treating it on the whole, is not more singular than useful and pertinent.— Should this prove the case, and the plan here sketched out incite some abler hand to give the world an accurate and comprehensive treatise of the polite and necessary art in question, he would be happy in finding the time he has bestowed upon it requited in the only way he had in view when he thus intruded himself into the republic of letters.

C O N-

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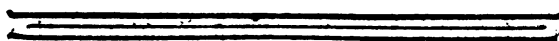
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THE
ART
OF DELIVERING
WRITTEN LANGUAGE.

CHAPTER.

The First.

That the warmth and energy of our delivery in reading, ought to be inferior to that used in speaking upon subjects in which we are immediately interested.

IN every exercise of the faculty of speech, and those expressions of countenance and gesture, with which it is generally attended, we may be

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2 THE ART OF DELIVERING

considered to be always in one of the two following situations : First, delivering our *bosom sentiments* on circumstances which relate to ourselves or others, or, secondly, *repeating* something that was spoken on a certain occasion for the amusement or information of an auditor. Now, if we observe the deliveries natural to these two situations, we shall find, that the first may be accompanied with every degree of expression, which can manifest itself in us, from the lowest of sympathy to the most violent and energetic of the superior passions ; while the latter, from the speaker's chief business being to repeat what he heard *with accuracy*, discovers only a faint imitation of those signs of the emotions, which we suppose agitated him, from whom the words

words were first borrowed.—The use and necessity of this difference of manner is evident ; and if we are attentive to these natural signs of expression, we shall find them conforming with the greatest nicety to the slightest and most minute movements of the breast.

This repetition of another's words might be supposed to pass through the mouth of a second or third person ; and in these cases, since they were not ear and eye witnesses of him who first spoke them, their manner of delivery would want the advantage necessarily arising from an immediate idea of the original one ; hence on this account be a still less lively representation than that of the first *repeater*. But as from a daily observation of every variety of speech and its associated signs of emo-

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tion, mankind soon become pretty well acquainted with them, and this in different degrees, according to their discernment, sensibility, &c. experience shews us that these latter *repeaters* (as we call them) might conceive and use a manner of delivery, which though less *characteristic* perhaps, would on the whole be no way inferior to the first, as to the *common* natural expression proper for their situation. It appears therefore, that repeaters *of every degree* may be esteemed upon a level as to animation, and that our twofold distinction above, contains accurately enough the whole variety of ordinary delivery ;—we say *ordinary*, because

There is another very peculiar kind of delivery sometimes used in the person of a *repeater*, of which it will in
this

this place be necessary to take some notice. What we mean here is *Mimicry*; an accomplishment, which, when perfectly and properly displayed, never fails of yielding a high degree of pleasure. But since this pleasure chiefly results from the principle of *imitation* respecting *manner*, and not from the purport of the *matter* communicated; since, comparatively speaking, it is only attainable by few persons and practised only on particular occasions,—on these accounts it must be refused a place among the modes of useful delivery taught us by *general* nature, and esteemed a qualification purely anomalous.

These distinctions with regard to a speaker's situation of mind premised, let us see to which of them an *author*

6 THE ART OF DELIVERING

and his *reader* may most properly be referred, and how they are circumstanced with regard to one another.

The matter of all books is either what the author says in his *own* person, or an acknowledged recital of the words of *others*: Hence an author may be esteemed both an *original* speaker and a *repeater*, accordingly as what he writes is of the first or second kind. Now a reader must be supposed either actually to personate the author, or one, whose office is barely to communicate what he has said to an auditor. But in the first of these suppositions he would, in the delivery of what is the author's own, evidently commence *mimic*; which being, as above observed, a character not acknowledged by general nature in this department, ought
to

to be rejected as generally improper *. The other supposition therefore must be accounted right ; and then, as to the *whole* matter of the book, the reader is found to be exactly in the situation of a *repeater*, save that he takes what he delivers from the page before him instead of his memory. It follows then, in proof of our initial proposition, that, if we are directed by nature and propriety, the manner of our delivery in reading ought to be inferior in warmth and energy to what we should use, were the language before us the spontaneous effusions of our own hearts in the cir-

* It may be of service to note here, that real *mimics* may occasionally make the language of a book an exercise for their powers as lawfully as the *living voice* ; but then we say they are in that case, in strictness, no longer *readers*.——See Chap. XIV.

cumstances of those out of whose mouths it is supposed to proceed.

Evident as the purport of this reasoning is, it has not so much as been glanced at, that I know of, by the writers on the subject we are now entered upon, or any of its kindred ones; which has occasioned a manifest want of accuracy in several of their rules and observations. Among the rest this precept has been long reverberated from author to author as a perfect standard for propriety in reading. “ Deliver
 “ yourselves in the same manner you
 “ would do, were the matter your own
 “ original sentiments uttered directly
 “ from the heart.” As all kinds of delivery must have many things in common, the rule will in many articles be undoubtedly right; but, from what has
 been

been said above, it must be as certainly faulty in respect to several others, as it is certain nature never confounds by like signs two things so very different, as a *copy* and an *original*, an emanation darted immediately from the sun, and its weaker appearance in the lunar reflexion.



CHAPTER

The Second.

The same subject continued.

HAVING in the foregoing chapter endeavoured to prove from *reason*, that our delivery in *reading* should be less animated than in interested *speaking*, we shall next attempt to shew that this is likewise confirmed by *experience*.

It is insinuated by a late writer *, that “ If after a person had delivered
“ his extemporaneous thoughts upon a
“ point in which he was interested,
“ with due force of emphasis, properly

* Author of a work called *Lectures on Elocution*.
See Lect. 1. (p. 2, 3, 4.)

“ varied

“ varied tones, and expressive looks,
 “ the same individual words which he
 “ had uttered were written down and
 “ given him to read, it would be found
 “ that he would *change* his whole man-
 “ ner; so that neither emphasis, tones,
 “ or cadences would be the same;
 “ but in their room he would substi-
 “ tute such as he was *taught* to read
 “ with; and that *all gesture and expres-*
 “ *sion of countenance would vanish.*”

This experiment, I conceive, would al-
 ways answer pretty nearly as described;
 and the reason why the delivery in the
 latter case is, as to animation, inferior
 to that of the former, must be plainly
 owing either to *custom* or *nature*. Now
 our author is of opinion, that the first
 of these is the cause; and indeed it
 cannot be denied, as he observes, that
 it

it might influence the *emphasis, tones, and cadences*, and induce the person in question to use such as he was taught to read with. But granting this influence to obtain, it surely will not be said, that it has ever been customary, in the usual methods of teaching to read, (and which this author endeavours to prove *altogether* absurd) to check and abate every expression of *look and gesture* the learner might fall into. But the experiment shews these articles to have undergone an equal alteration with the other.—We must then attribute this *vanishing of all gesture and expression of countenance, to nature*; who, in a situation of the kind alluded to, does neither require their appearance, nor that of *expressive tones*, in any striking degree, if at all: for, if we
grant

grant that the signs of the emotions have, and ought to have, a significant reference to our situation, we may easily see a difference in the state of a person's mind, when unfolding his warm interested sentiments, and when reading them over again to oblige a friend, (who perhaps had taken them down for he did not know what whimsical purpose) equal at least to the difference of the two manners our author has compared together, and such also as can leave us no doubt concerning its real cause.—In fact, though the words were the person's own but a moment before, he is in the second delivery of them nothing more than one of the *repeaters* mentioned in the preceding chapter.

If

If this reasoning should not appear satisfactory, and the author's principles of *habit* and *fashion* be still thought to lead to a better solution, I add, in farther support of it, that if mankind were equally prone from the first use of letters, or prior (if there be not something absurd in the supposition) to all established modes of teaching to read, *to deliver written language, as if the matter proceeded from their own lips in ordinary speaking*, it seems to me unaccountably strange that *nature* (who would allow *custom* an equal opportunity to deprave *speaking* as *reading*) should be so far overcome in the latter article, as that she should *never*, nay that she should not *frequently*, regain her genuine authority, and shew us an example in the
walks

walks of pure simplicity, where she solely presided. But, instead of this, I have no doubt but that in every age, nation, and instance of individuals, the first has suffered the change in question, and the latter escaped it; from which circumstance, if true, we can draw no other reasonable inference, but that nature always intended to manifest herself, in these two cases, in two different ways.

Here then we have an experimental instance, which, if we have rightly interpreted it, fully confirms the doctrine advanced in the foregoing chapter. And if, in farther support of our argument, we recur to the writers of antiquity, we shall find that wherever the subject is mentioned, they are as express as possible, that the *declamation* and *reading* of those times were in some articles

articles remarkably different from their *ordinary speaking*; while I can find nothing in the practice of other modern nations, but what greatly confirms its general propriety.

After all, and to conclude the subject. Though the different manners of delivery in the two different situations so often opposed to each other in these chapters, should be allowed to have the sanction of nature, it is not pretended that what she does in this case, is all that ought to be done, or that she is sufficient of herself to supersede all farther assistance; since in every species of delivery, as indeed in every qualification of man, *art* very visibly lends its aid as well as *nature*. What I would inculcate is only the necessity that she should have *some* attention

attention paid to her, and that, though many circumstances may occur to give the former very various and extensive degrees of influence, yet the latter ought never to be left totally out of sight.



C

C H A P-

CHAPTER

The Third.

Apology: — Plan of carrying on the enquiry, &c.

IT will in all likelihood appear to the intelligent reader, that more than enough has been said on the subject of the preceding chapters. But as it has so happened, that all our authors on the art of *reading* have imagined its principles and those of *speaking* to be the same as to delivery, a few pages extraordinary attempting to shew this mistake at full length in a capital article, cannot stand much in need of apology.

Besides the inaccuracy alluded to above, there is perhaps another particular

cular or two, in which the rule hitherto esteemed a perfect one for reading is capable of improvement, and which as they will not require many words to explain, are occasionally noticed in the following part of the work.

If then it be granted, in the end, that our objections to the accuracy of the old rule are well founded, the improved state of our literature certainly requires that something should be done to correct it * ; and how far what we have

C 2 to

* More especially with regard to a late noted publication, we have already mentioned, an attempt of this kind is become necessary ; since what it contains on the subject amounts to a full declaration, that as our written language now stands (because we have no marks for *tones, gestures, &c.*) nothing deserves the name of reading, which is not repeated from memory with all the graces
of

to advance for this purpose is satisfactory and worthy of adoption the judicious public must determine. — In this decision, however, the author hopes, along with the ordinary maxims of candour, the following particulars will not be forgot : First, that, according to the light, in which the subject is viewed, our plan frequently extends no farther than to take notice of what *is* or *is not* to be done, without having any particular regard to the methods of attaining the necessary qualifications. Secondly, that since (as is the case in every art of the polite kind) many of our rules and observations must be founded on the *capricious* principles of theatric action. — Accordingly, like those which had appeared before, the greatest part of its precepts are overcharged with the vehemence and warmth of public speaking.

Taste,

Taste, it will be wrong ever to expect a system of precepts for reading, concerning several articles of which a variety of opinions will not be raising a variety of objections.

As the precepts we have to offer for improving the above-mentioned rule cannot conveniently be brought under one head, we shall give them as opportunity serves in the course of the following chapters, on *Accent, Emphasis, Modulation, Expression, Pauses, &c.* into the discussion of which topics, among other occasional ones, our design of attempting a short analysis of speech now naturally leads us.

CHAPTER

The Fourth.

ACCENT.

IN attending to the affections of the voice when we speak, it is easy to observe, that, independent of any other consideration, one part of it differs from another, in *stress*, *energy*, or *force* of utterance. In words we find one syllable differing from another with respect to this mode; and in sentences one or more words as frequently vary from the rest in a similar manner. This stress with regard to *syllables* is called *accent*, and contributes greatly to the variety and harmony of language. Respecting *words* it is termed *emphasis*, and its chief office

office is to assist the sense, force, or perspicuity of the sentence — of which more in the next chapter.

“ Accent,” as described in the *Lectures on Elocution* *, “ is made by us
 “ two ways ; either by dwelling longer
 “ upon one syllable than the rest ; or
 “ by giving it a smarter percussive of
 “ the voice in utterance. Of the first
 “ of these we have instances in the
 “ words *glōry*, *fāther*, *bōly* ; of the
 “ last in *battle*, *babit*, *bor’row*. So that
 “ accent with us is not referred to tune,
 “ but to time ; to quantity, not qua-
 “ lity ; to the more equable, or pre-
 “ cipitate motion of the voice, not to
 “ the variation of the notes or in-
 “ flexions.” But since in reading,
 words must be accented in the same

* Lecture 3d.

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manner as they are in speaking, and this essay of consequence presupposes every student to be master of a fashionable pronunciation, so far as it relates to accent, it is unnecessary to be at the pains of handling the subject minutely, or to enumerate any more of its properties than those above *. One thing

* I chose to adopt the above account of accent, as it agrees very well with what is conceived of it in general, and will answer every end for which it has a place in this essay ; though, like many other logical descriptions of a similar nature, it has not passed without being controverted. Particularly the author of *An Introduction to the Art of Reading with energy and propriety*, published since these sheets were first drawn up, has taken some pains to shew it to be erroneous and unsatisfactory. But as a perfectly accurate and extensive idea of accent, if ever so happily exemplified, would lead into very intricate and tedious disquisitions, I hope to have the reader's pardon for not attempting to examine the merits of what our two authors have advanced upon it, and thereby shunning a task equally unpleasing and unprofitable.

farther,

farther, however, this article suggests, which the curious reader may not think unworthy of some notice.

In *theatric declamation*, in order to give it more pomp and solemnity, it is usual to dwell longer than common upon the unaccented syllables, and the author before quoted, has endeavoured to prove (p. 51. 54.) the practice faulty, and to shew (p. 55.) that “ though
 “ it (i. e. true solemnity) may de-
 “ mand a slower utterance than usual,
 “ yet (it) requires that the same pro-
 “ portion in point of quantity be ob-
 “ served in the syllables, as there is in
 “ musical notes, when the same tune
 “ is played in quicker or slower time.”
 But that this deviation from ordinary speech is not a fault, as our author asserts, nay, that on the contrary it is a
 real

real beauty, when kept under proper regulation, the following observations I hope will sufficiently prove.

(I.) It is a truth of the most obvious nature, that those things which on their application to their proper senses, have a power of raising in us certain ideas and emotions, are ever *differently* modified in their constituent parts, when different effects are produced in the mind; and also (II.) that, within proper bounds, were we to suppose these constituent parts to be proportionally encreased or diminished, as to *quantity*, this effect would still be the same as to *quality*.—
For instance: The different ideas of strength, swiftness, &c. which are raised in us by the same species of animals, is owing to the different form of
their

their corresponding parts ; the different effects of music on the passions, to the different airs and movements of the melody ; and the different expressions of human speech, to a difference in tone, speed, &c. of the voice. And these peculiar effects would still remain the same, were we to suppose the animals above alluded to, to be *greater* or *lesser*, within their proper bounds ; the movement of the music *quicker* or *slower*, provided it did not palpably interfere with that of some other species ; and the pitch of the voice *higher* or *lower*, if not carried out of the limits in which it is observed on similar occasions naturally to rove. Farther (III.) since, respecting the emotions more especially, there are no rules to determine *a priori*, what effect any particular attribute

bute or modification of an object will have upon a percipient, our knowledge of this kind must evidently be gained from experience. To the above observations let the following one be added (which will be particularly discussed a little farther on*) and then we will apply these long premises to the matter in hand. (IV.) In every art imitating nature we are pleased to see the characteristic members of the pattern *heightened* a little farther than perhaps it ever was carried in any real example, provided it be not bordering upon some ludicrous and disagreeable provinces of excess.

Now for the application.—To keep pace and be consistent with the *dignity* of the tragic muse, the delivery of her

* See Chap. XII.

language

language should necessarily be dignified ; and this it is plain from observation (I.) cannot be accomplished otherwise than by something different in the manner of it from that of ordinary speech ; since *dignity* is essentially different from *familiarity*. But how must we discover this different manner ? By attending to nature : and in this case she tells us, that besides using a *slower* delivery, and greater *distinctness* of the words (which every thing meerly *grave* requires, and gravity is a *concomitant* of dignity, though not its *essence*) we must dwell a little *longer* upon the *unaccented* syllables than we do in common. As to what our author observes in the above quotation, of *dignity's* only requiring a *slower* utterance than ordinary, while the proportion of the syllables as to
quantity

quantity continues the same, I apprehend the remark (II.) respecting *quickness* and *slowness* of movement, will shew to be not altogether true. For since the delivery is not altered in *form*, its expression must be still of the same kind, and perhaps what may be rightly suggested by the term *gravely familiar*.

But something farther may yet be said in defence of this *artificial* delivery, as our author calls it. Is not the movement of any thing, of whatever species, when dignified or solemn, in general of an *equable* and *deliberate* nature (as in the minuet, the military step, &c.) ? And in theatrical declamation, is not the propensity to introduce this *equableness* so strong, that it is almost *impossible* to avoid it wholly, were we ever so determined to do it ? If these two queries
be

be answered in the affirmative (as I am persuaded they will) while the first supports our argument for the *propriety* of the manner of delivery in question, the second discovers a kind of *necessity* for it. And that this manner may be carried a little *farther* in quantity on the *stage* than is usual in *real life*, the principle (IV.) of heightening nature will justify, provided fashion (which has ever something to do in these articles) give it a sanction; for the *precise* quantity of several heightenings may be varied by this great legislator, almost at will.

On the whole then, since a number of instances daily occur of similar deviations from common nature in the arts, &c. they that will not allow of an encroachment upon the general properties

ties of pronunciation, when a certain expression is naturally gained thereby, and call the practice faulty, they, I say, would certainly call the uncommon disproportion between the head and neck of an antique *Hercules* a most egregious blemish.—But every connoisseur will tell us, that one source of the expression of this great strength depends intirely on this deviation from the ordinary proportion these parts have to one another in the human frame *.

* See the argument contained in this hint farther enlarged upon in Chap. XII.

CHAPTER

The Fifth.

E M P H A S I S.

AS *emphasis* is not a thing annexed to particular words, as *accent* is to syllables, but owes its rise chiefly to the *meaning* of a passage, and must therefore vary its seat according as that meaning varies, it will be necessary to explain a little farther the general idea given of it in the last chapter.

Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
 Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
 Brought death into the world, and all our woe, &c.
 Sing heav'nly muse, &c.

D Supposing,

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Supposing, in reference to the above well-known lines, that originally other beings, besides men, had disobeyed the commands of the Almighty, and that the circumstance were well known to us, there would fall an *emphasis* upon the word *man's* in the first line, and hence it would be read thus ;

'Of *man's* first disobedience, and the fruit, &c.

But if it were a notorious truth, that mankind had transgressed in a peculiar manner more than once, the *emphasis* would fall on *first*, and the line be read,

Of man's *first* disobedience, &c.

Again, admitting death (as was really the case) to have been an unheard of and dreadful punishment brought upon
man

man in consequence of his transgression ; on that supposition the third line would be read,

Brought *death* into the world, &c.

But if we were to suppose mankind knew there was such an evil as death in other regions, though the place they inhabited had been free from it till their transgression ; the line would run thus,

Brought death into the *world*, &c.

Now from a proper delivery of the above lines, with regard to any one of the suppositions we have chosen, out of several others, that might in the same manner have been imagined, it will appear that the *emphasis* they illustrate is effected by a manifest *delay* in the pronunciation,

nunciation, and a tone something *fuller* and *louder*, than is used in ordinary; and that its office is solely to determine the meaning of a sentence with reference to something said before, presupposed by the author as general knowledge, or in order to remove an ambiguity, where a passage is capable of having more senses given to it than one *.

But

* I am glad to find the author of *the Introduction to the Art of Reading*, above-mentioned, agreeing with me in the office of what I call, a little farther on, *emphasis of sense*, and what he (not having distinguished this stress into two kinds, of course) terms *emphasis simply*. There is nothing perhaps more common among readers than an abuse of this emphasis, arising from a too frequent and ostentatious use of it; which naturally leads to several puerile and fanciful meanings the context cannot support, and what no doubt were very distant from the thoughts of the writer. With these

But supposing in the above example, that none of the senses there pointed out were precisely the true one, and that the meaning of the lines were no other than what is obviously suggested by their simple construction; in that case it may be asked, if in reading them there should be no word dignified with the emphatical accompaniments above described?—I answer, not one with an emphasis of the *same* kind as that we have just been illustrating; yet it is nevertheless true that on hearing these lines well read we shall find some words

these particulars in view our author has examined the many instances of emphasizing given in the *Lectures on Elocution*, and I think in the course of his strictures, he has shewn very clearly, that the greatest part of them are chargeable with directing to meanings of the faulty kind hinted at above.

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distinguished from the rest by a manner of delivery bordering a little upon it *. And these words will in general be such as seem the most important in the sentence, or on other accounts to merit this distinction. But as at best

* I presume the two following lines will illustrate both these kinds of stresses : For to convey their right meaning, the word ANY is evidently to be pronounced louder and fuller than these with the accents over them,

Get wéalth and pláce, if possible with gráce,
If not, by ANY méans get wéalth and pláce.

POPE.

This couplet is accented in the manner we find it in the *Essay on Elocution* by *Mason*. And if, according to the judgment of this author, the words thus distinguished are to have an emphatical stress, it must be of the inferior kind above-mentioned, and which a little farther on we call *emphasis of force* ; while the word ANY in a different type alone possesses the other sort of energy, and which is there contradistinguished by the term *emphasis of sense*.

it

it only *enforces*, *graces*, or *enlivens*, and not *fixes* the meaning of any passage, and even caprice and fashion † have often a hand in determining its place and magnitude, it cannot properly be reckoned an *essential* of delivery. However, it is of too much moment to be neglected

† Among a number of people who have had proper opportunities of learning to read in the best manner it is now taught, it would be difficult to find two, who in a given instance, would use the *emphasis of force* alike, either as to place or quantity. Nay some scarce use any at all, and others will not scruple to carry it *much* beyond any thing we have a precedent for in common discourse, and even now and then throw it upon words so very trifling in themselves, that it is evident they do it with no other view, than for the sake of the *variety* it gives to the modulation.—— This practice, like the introduction of discords into music, may without doubt be indulged now and then; but were it too frequent the capital intent of these energies would manifestly either be destroyed or rendered dubious.

by those who would wish to be good readers ; and for the sake of distinction, we may not unaptly denominate both the kinds of energies in question, by the terms *emphasis of sense* and *emphasis of force* *.

Now from the above account of these two species of emphasis it will appear, “ that in reading, as in speaking, the
“ first of them must be determined in-
“ tirely by the *sense* of the passage, and

* The first of these terms answers to the *simple emphasis* described in the *Lectures on Elocution*, and the second nearly to what is there called *complex*. The difference lies in this. Under *complex emphasis* the author seems (for he is far from being clear in this article) to include the *tones* simply considered of all the emotions of the mind ; as well the *tender* and *languid*, as the *forcible* and *exulting*. Our term is intended to be confined to such modes of expression alone as are marked with an apparent *stress* or *increase* of voice.

“ always

“ always made *alike*: But as to the
 “ other, *Taste* alone seems to have a
 “ right of fixing its situation and quan-
 “ tity.”—Farther: Since the more es-
 sential of these two energies is solely
 the work of *nature* (as appears by its
 being *constantly* found in the common
 conversation of people of all kinds of
 capacities and degrees of knowledge)
 and the most ignorant person never fails
 of using it *rightly* in the effusions of his
 own heart, it happens very luckily, and
 ought always to be remembered, that
 provided we understand what we read,
 and give way to the dictates of our own
 feeling, the *emphasis of sense* can scarce
 ever avoid falling spontaneously upon its
 proper place.

Here it will be necessary to say some-
 thing by way of reply to a question which
 will

will naturally occur to the mind of every one.—As the rule for the *emphasis of sense* requires we should understand what we read, before it can be properly used, is it incumbent upon us never to attempt to read what we have not previously studied for that purpose? In answer to this it must be observed, that though such a step will not be without its advantages, yet, as from the fairness of printed types; the well-known pauses of punctuation, and a long acquaintance with the phraseology and construction of our language, &c. experience tells us it is *possible* to comprehend the sense at the first reading, a previous perusal of what is to be read does not seem *necessary* to *all*, though, if they would wish to appear to advantage, it may be *expedient* to *many*; and it is this circumstance

stance which makes us venture upon extemporary reading, and give it a place among our amusements.—Similar remarks might be made with regard to *modulation, expression, &c.* did not what is here observed naturally anticipate them.



CHAPTER

*The Sixth.*EMPHASIS *farther considered.*

SOME writers on Elocution have imagined, that if certain marks were invented to distinguish in books every word of the emphatical kind from the rest, it would be of considerable advantage to children in learning to read. But if the matter were properly examined into, and put to the test of experience, I am inclined to believe it would be soon found, that, without great hazard of doing an injury, where a service was intended, such an expedient can never be carried farther than the *emphasis of sense*. This affection of the voice, it is true,
 may

may readily be recalled to the mind of a learner by a certain mark, since it is *obvious, constant*, and what from our infancy we daily hear and practice. And agreeably to this, in most good authors we find the *emphasis of sense* printed in *italics*.—At least this distinction is observed, where the emphatical word precedes that which makes it so, or where the neglect of it might occasion an ambiguity. For though the quick intuitive faculty proficient in reading have acquired, of apprehending the meaning of the more ordinary passages of a book as the eye goes before the utterance, may render it unnecessary to point out what nature, in that case, will readily do of herself, yet, in the two instances above-mentioned, were these typical notices neglected, the danger of either *not* conceiving,

ceiving, or *mis*-conceiving the sense, is so great as to make them indispensably requisite, where an author wishes to be easily understood.

These observations may serve to shew on what account it is of use to have a mark in books for the *emphasis of sense*. And what follows is the enumeration of a few particulars relating to the inutility of a similar distinction of the *emphasis of force*.

It was shewn in the last chapter that this species of emphasis, though of great service in enforcing a passage, is not altogether necessary to its sense, that of consequence it has its origin more from *art* than *nature*, and that it is as far from being fixed as to quantity and sometimes even place, as are the tastes and opinions of mankind. It was hinted
also,

also, that the *emphasis of force* is perhaps, when rightly made, always of a magnitude inferior to that of the other species.—And if we were to consider the encrease of its *stress*, and *delay*, above these articles respectively, as they are used in the ordinary tenor of the voice, it may be remarked, that their quantity is so small as to render it difficult, if not impossible, to fix it in any given instance in reference to that tenor. Declining therefore to say any thing farther on so nice and useless a disquisition, let us suppose that by agreement the *emphasis of force* were reduced to *one* uniform manner, and that it were to be learned by *example* of those good readers, who were in possession of it.—This it must be confessed is a scheme which would render the marks under

consideration very *significant*; and though not expressed is undoubtedly what every one has in view who recommends them. But granting the plan liable to no objection as to practice, I query but its signatures would be found altogether *unnecessary*. For experience will tell us, that young people, before they are endued with a considerable share of taste, are, in endeavouring after this delicate alteration of voice, almost unavoidably inclined to distort; and awkwardly betray that *artificial* source, from whence it chiefly has its rise. And if we allow them to have this qualification, then I am also persuaded that, *that* taste which enabled them to make the *emphasis of force* properly as to *quantity*, will also direct them judiciously with regard to its *place*. And if we
farther

farther consider, that there is a great deal more of *ease* and *nature* in the execution of any art, where we follow our own taste, than when we are bare imitators of another person's; that something of *variety*, where it can be indulged, is preferable to *uniformity*, and that a delivery already on the wing, as it were, may often reach in this species of emphasis what may be called a pleasing *anomaly*, it appears, that besides being unnecessary, these marks would in some degree prove a *hindrance* to good reading.

Here we suppose two kinds of emphasis, and a difference between their characters: but what must we think of a plan for instructing learners to read, which confounds them both together? In some of these initiating books lately

published, this will appear to be the case; and accordingly often one half, and seldom less than one third or one fourth of the matter on a page is pointed out by a different type to be emphatical. Now if we suppose the learner to be perfectly master of the *emphasis of sense* as to voice, it is natural to expect he will use it constantly, wherever he meets with such matter; which emphasis, besides its being perhaps of too violent a cast to be *still* agreeable, &c. has evidently now and then a chance to strike out a *wrong* meaning, a fault doubtless of a greater kind than if no emphasis were attempted at all. But if this was not the case, or if the pupil should endeavour to avoid an *uniformity* in these emphatical elevations, it would be found on trial, that, where he was

not

not instantly assisted by the voice of his teacher (a thing to be supposed very common) he would be exceedingly apt to make them all either too high or otherwise too gross. For as the mind has now neither *nature*, *habit*, nor *precedent* for its guide, the magnitude of the emphasis must be determined by something *accidental*, and I apprehend, that the idea formed of the difference there is between the two types, the matter is printed in, will have the greatest sway in suggesting the manner of delivering the emphatical and unemphatical words. Hence as this idea must for the most part be an extravagant one, may it not be concluded on good grounds, that this plan of printing books for the instruction of children in the art of reading, is so far from

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being likely to answer the useful purpose for which it was intended, that perhaps it would not have been easy to have fallen upon a more dangerous expedient.—These objections arose chiefly from a bare consideration of the scheme in question; and an ingenious friend, who has had the greatest opportunity to try it, tells me his experience has confirmed their truth in a thousand instances *.

* If after all we have urged above, it should appear that marks for the latter kind of emphasis *may* be of use to young persons learning to read, the single circumstance respecting the influence the idea of the difference between the appearance of the two kinds of types has in forming the emphasis, must I think, set *that* plan intirely aside. And perhaps an accent (') placed over such words as require *the emphasis of force*, while the *emphasis of sense* has a different character, may be as eligible a method of distinguishing these energies as any other.

C H A P. .

CHAPTER

The Seventh.

How Speech is produced, and of the difference between speaking and singing.

IF the natural current of air which passes in ordinary through a person's mouth, either into or out of the lungs, be urged a little more forcibly than usual, we may observe, that, in consequence of the different openings of the mouth, position and motion of the tongue, lips, &c. it will produce a faint kind of sound, which may be easily modified into notes so far similar to those used in singing, that the air of a tune may be communicated by it.

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These effects of the passing breath taken in *all* their appearances constitute what is called *articulation*, or that species of sound which is peculiar to oral language. Hence we have the method of communicating our thoughts by what is called *whispering* ; which though a manner of delivery, that can only be understood at a small distance, is nevertheless far from being indistinct or unintelligible in its voices.

From this it appears, that what is commonly understood by speech must require something more in its formation than the particulars hitherto taken notice of, and that is, in short, as we are told by anatomists, a peculiar kind of aperture, called the *glottis*, through which in speaking the air must pass
from

from the lungs to the mouth. The lips of this opening, they tell us, are very elastic and sonorous, and by the help of their governing muscles may be variously dilated and contracted. Hence arises (by the air being forced into undulatory motions as it passes through it) those different and reed-like sounds we may perceive to be formed in the throat, and which, though the mouth be shut, may at any time be produced.

It may be inferred from this account of the glottis and its effects, that in ordinary breathing, the muscles which govern it, are relaxed so much as to leave an orifice wide enough for the air to pass freely through it, without shaking the adjacent parts, so as to produce

E 4

sound.

found. But, on the contrary, when we are inclined to speak or sing, a contraction ensues, which causes the air, from the impediment it meets with, to actuate the sounding cartilages with a tremulous motion ; and according to the degree of this contraction (and consequent smallness of the aperture) the resulting tones vary in magnitude through all the compass of the voice, from the lowest tone to the highest. The current of air which produces this sound, being articulated, as in *whispering*, produces ordinary speech ; and what makes the articulation louder in the present case, than in the other just mentioned, is probably nothing more than the *co-existence* of the sound of the glottis : For two adjacent sounds of whatever kind, produced together, and both audible, always

ways seem to encrease or strengthen each other *.

It has been matter of dispute among philosophers, whether the tones formed in the glottis suffer any alteration in the mouth, as to *gravity* and *acuteness*; some (as *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, and after him *Lord Kamis*) believing that in pronouncing with the same aperture, the voice may be varied in tone to the extent of three notes and a half, while others with more probability (as *Ammonius*, and the incomparable author of *Hermes*, &c.) are of opinion, that nothing farther can happen to it, than the necessary qualities given it by articula-

* This idea of articulation is the more particularly opened, in order to prevent the notion, that sound considered in the *abstract* is capable of articulation; which I apprehend is as erroneous, as at first view it may appear plausible.

tion.

tion. In support of this last account, it may be observed, that though the natural sounds of a *haut-boy*, *organ-pipe*, &c. may be flattened and sharpened by some trifling alteration of their constituent parts, yet when these sounds are once completely formed, and, as one may say, have got beyond the limits of the instrument, their musical tones receive no alteration from surrounding objects, farther than *strength*, *weakness*, and the like casual adjuncts. Nor does the communication of the wind-pipe with the mouth, I apprehend, create any objection against this doctrine; since the cavity of the latter is too great, in proportion to that of the former, to make them both considered as parts of the same instrument for generating the tones of voice in speaking. We may perceive,

perceive, however, in founding the notes contained in the full extent of the voice, that the mouth will naturally alter its shape ; but this seems to be owing to some effect it has upon the glottis, in contracting or opening it *farther* than it would be easy or perhaps practicable to do by the muscles which command it, merely in consequence of the will, and not to any alteration it gives to the tones of the emitted sounds *.

* This I take to be fully proved by these easy experiments. A common and not extensive compass of notes may be founded with the mouth quite shut, and the tongue perfectly at rest. And if, while dwelling upon any particular note, as in singing, we designedly alter the shape of the mouth, &c. we shall find that its *tone* continues still the same, and that all the change which will be made is only in the *accompanying* sounds formed by the percussions of the breath against the *varying* obstacles of the mouth.

As

As the method of articulating sound has been but slightly touched upon above, we shall here explain it a little farther, by describing the formation of two or three particular words.

In speaking the word *sleep*, we shall find, that, by the air passing pretty forcibly over the top of the tongue, as its end gently approaches the gums of the higher row of teeth, a hissing kind of noise is created: Immediately after the commencement of this, while the tongue is easily carried towards the roof of the mouth (as in pronouncing the letter L) the glottis begins to sound, which is no sooner heard, than the word is completed by an abrupt closing of the lips. In the formation of the word *pass* the glottis begins to sound

found with a hasty opening of the lips, and is concluded with the hissing position of the tongue above-mentioned. The word *them* is formed by a gentle passage of the breath over the tongue, while its end is just projected between the teeth, and slightly touching the higher row, and the lips leisurely drawn together as the sound is emitted from the glottis. Conceiving the assistance of the sound from the wind-pipe as before, the beginning of the word *ruff* is made by a tremulous motion of the point of the tongue against the roof of the mouth, and concluded by a pretty brisk blowing of the air through the teeth against the upper lip, while the tongue is touching the lower row of teeth.

In

In like manner it would be easy to lay down the formation of any other word of one or more syllables ; for every syllable in a word is pronounced distinctly and independent of the rest.

Thus we find, agreeably to what was said before, that ordinary articulation is effected by variously beginning, ending, or accompanying the sound produced from the wind-pipe with that species of sound used in whispering, as it is modified by a number of different motions, positions, and affections of the mouth, lips, teeth, tongue, &c.

It may be farther observed, in order to discover the difference between the tones used in *speaking* and *singing*, that in the former, the sound from the glottis never begins before, nor continues after
the

the articulation of every distinct syllable *, nay, that generally it only exists in the middle of this formation; and also that during the very short time of its
being

* I do not expect the reader will agree with me at first in this account of the manner in which the glottis gives its sounds in pronunciation. He will probably think that the sound is *continued*, and broken into small parts by the tongue, lips, &c. But let us put it to the test of experiment. First, let a person try to make an evidently continued sound, and instead of *speaking*, I dare say he will find himself *singing*, and that it is not in the power of articulation to break it into portions. Next, let him pronounce any long word by syllables, at a very perceivable distance from one another at the first, and then nearer and nearer by degrees, till they make the usual manner of founding the word, and he will perceive in every degree of quickness of the succession, that the sound of the glottis naturally ceases, and so by a kind of analogy it is inferred that in their quickest succession (i. e. when they form the word as commonly pronounced) they make no otherwise a *continued* sound than by following one
another

being heard, it is frequently not fixed as to tone but (from a change in the aperture) manifests an undulatory whining kind of inflection.

Farther : Were the sounds of the glottis, which assist in speaking, continued so as to be properly distinguished, I apprehend we should find them sometimes differing from one another by intervals of a very considerable magnitude, but most commonly by the smallest part of a note †.

Speech

another without being interrupted by any *perceptible* pause. This property should in the subject before us be carefully attended to, as it discovers, slight as it may seem, one of the chief characteristics of the sounds belonging to speech.

† The author to the *Introduction to the Art of Reading* before-mentioned, is of opinion, that though there is (and ought to be) a different *key*, as he calls it, used in every sentence, or capital part

Speech then may be defined “ a suc-
 “ cession of very short sounds emitted
 “ with

part of a sentence, or period, according to the nature of the subject, yet there is (and ought to be) no elevation or depression of the voice on particular words in the course of either speaking or reading only one complete sentence, &c. ; the whole being conveyed in precisely the same tone. (See p. 27. note, p. 36.) In support of this opinion he tells us (note, p. 117.) that on reading several passages from *Milton* and other poets to one of our greatest masters in music, he “ after
 “ paying the utmost attention to the several articulate sounds in each sentence, declared them
 “ to be all of the same tone.”

I am as far from disputing the niceness of this musician's ear, as I am from thinking my own any way particularly distinguishing, yet I am inclined to believe both our author and his friend have fallen into a mistake, for want of making their experiments properly ; which what follows perhaps might tend to rectify.

As the sounds emitted from the trachea in reading and speaking are so very transitory, and their difference often so very minute, it is almost next to impossible for the ear to catch and esti-

“ with ease through the glottis at the
 “ pronunciation of every distinct syllable,

mate them, as they arise in the course of *common* delivery. But, if any person with a tolerable ear will endeavour, according to the hint above, to *preserve* the tones which *seem* to be of different heights in his speaking or reading, sufficiently long to let them characterize themselves, or put some instrument in unison with them, I dare say, after a little practice (which will sometimes be required to be clear about it) he will be satisfied, that in pronouncing two or more words of the same sentence, there are frequently elevations and depressions of the tones in question.—We may have another way of satisfying ourselves pretty well of the truth of what is here advanced, by pronouncing any proper period with design *all of a height* and under the same aperture of the glottis. For in that case the very different appearance the modulation has from what it would have, if fashionably read, must lead us to conclude, that the variable cast of the *common* delivery must be owing to a variation in the tones issuing from the glottis to embody, as it were, the distinct syllables.

In

“ ble, frequently shifting at once, or
 “ *gliding* in a wave-like manner through
 “ small immeasurable intervals, and
 “ now and then *leaping* from one
 “ musical note to another considera-
 “ bly distant; but in all cases arti-
 “ culated by the effluent breath as it
 “ is differently affected by the organs
 “ of the mouth.” As to singing, I
 conceive its description to be pretty ob-
 vious: “ It is a succession of sounds

In the account of emphasis given page 36, we said it was only a *fuller* and *louder* pronunciation of the word on which it was to fall; and here it may not be amiss to add, that besides these properties, there is some reason to suspect, that it is at the same time attended with a slight inflexion of the voice to a tone *a little more elevated*, than it would have been conveyed in as a common word. Whether it be or be not so is matter of very small consequence, save only as it relates to *speculation*, the chief object of this chapter.

“ from the glottis, which, whatever be
 “ the quantity of their leaps or inter-
 “ vals, always agree with some note of
 “ an established measurable scale ; rest-
 “ ing *perceptibly* upon every note ; re-
 “ quiring a much more forcible respira-
 “ tion of the breath than common ;
 “ capable of several musical graces (as
 “ the *shake, swell, &c.*) and, when it is
 “ the vehicle of words, frequently
 “ heard after the articulation is at an
 “ end.” Hence it appears to me (and
 I imagine it will do so to better judges)
 that, not to repeat any other, the es-
 sential and chief difference between the
 tones used in speaking and singing lies
 in the latter being carried on by distinct
 intervals of some continuance, that will
 harmonize with other accompanying
 sounds,

sounds, while the former is in general made up of such minute and evanescent variations and inflexions of voice, as could not possibly have a place in any scale of practical music whatever.



CHAPTER

The Eighth.

MODULATION*.

EVERY person must have observed, that in speaking, the voice is subject to an alteration of sound, which

* The author of the *Introduction to the Art of Reading*, not allowing that there is any variation of tone, as to *high* and *low*, in the delivery of a complete period or sentence, places modulation solely in the diversification of the key-note, and the variety of syllables, as to *long* or *short*, *swift* or *slow*, *strong* or *weak*, and *loud* or *soft*. As we are of a different opinion, our idea of modulation is confined purely to *harmonious inflexions of voice*. These qualities of words it is true add greatly both to the force and beauty of delivery ; yet since some of them are fixed and not arbitrary (as *long* and *short*) and the others (of *swift* and *slow*, *strong* and *weak*, *loud* and *soft*) may be considered as modes

which in some measure resembles the movement of a tune. These sounds however are evidently nothing like so much varied as those that are strictly musical, and we have attempted to shew in the preceding chapter, that besides this they have an essential difference in themselves. Nevertheless, from the general similitude of these two articles, they possess several terms in common, and the particular we have now to examine is in both of them called *modulation*. This affection of the voice, being totally *arbitrary*, is differently characterized in different parts of the world,

modes of execution, which do not affect the modulation as to *tone*, it will agree best with our plan to esteem these properties as respectively belonging to the established laws of *pronunciation*, and the *imitative* branch of expression mentioned in the end of the ensuing chapter.

and through the power of custom every place is inclined to think their own the only one natural and agreeable, and the rest affected with some barbarous twang or ungainly variation *. It may be observed, however, that though there is a general uniform cast or fashion of modulation

* From what accounts we have remaining of the modulation of the antients, it appears to have been highly ornamented, and apparently something not unlike our modern *recitative*: Particularly that of their theatric declamation was music in its strictest sense, and accompanied with instruments. In the course of time and the progress of refinement this modulation became gradually more and more simple, till it has now lost the genius of music, and is intirely regulated by taste. At home here every one has heard the *sing-seng* cant, as it is called, of

Ti ti dum dum, ti ti dum ti dum de,
Ti dum ti dum, ti dum ti dum dum te,

which

dulation peculiar to every country, yet it by no means follows, that there is or can be any thing fixed in its application to particular passages; and therefore we find different people will in any given instance use modulations something different, and nevertheless be each of them equally agreeable.

But quitting these general remarks we shall (as our purpose requires it)

which though disgusting now to all but mere rustics, on account of its being out of fashion, was very probably the favourite modulation, in which heroic verses were recited by our ancestors. So fluctuating are the taste and practices of mankind ! But whether the power of language over the passions has received any advantage from the change just mentioned, will appear at least very doubtful, when we recollect the stories of its former triumphs, and the inherent charms of musical sounds,

consider

consider the properties of modulation a little more minutely.

First then we may observe, that in speaking there is a particular sound (or *key-note*, as it is often called) in which the modulation for the most part runs, and to which its occasional inflexions either above or below may in some respects be conceived to have a reference, like that, which common music has to its key-note. Yet there is this difference between the two kinds of modulation, that whereas the first always concludes in the key-note, the other frequently concludes a little below it*.

This

* As musical sounds have always an harmonical reference to a key or fundamental note, and to which the mind is still secretly attending, no piece of music would appear perfect, that did not
close

This key-note in speaking is generally the sound given at the outset of every complete sentence or period, and it may be observed on some occasions to vary its pitch through the limits of a musical interval of a considerable magnitude. The tones, that fall a little lower than the key at the close of a sentence or period, are called *Cadences*. These cadences, if we are accurate in our distinctions, will, with respect to their offices, be found of two kinds, though they meet so frequently together, that

close in it, and so naturally put an end to expectation. But as the tones used in speech are not musical; and therefore cannot refer harmonically to any other sound, there can be no necessity that this terminating sound (and which we immediately below term the *cadence*) should either be used at all, or follow any particular law as to form, &c. farther than what is imposed by taste and custom.

it

it may be best to conceive them only as answering a double purpose. One of these offices is to assist the sense, and the other to decorate the modulation. An account of the first may be seen in the following chapter on *Pauses**; and the latter I presume will be found to shew itself pretty frequently in every thing grave and plaintive, or in poetic descriptions and other highly ornamented language, where the mind is by its influence brought to feel a placid kind of dignity and satisfaction. —These two cadences therefore may be conveniently distinguished by applying to them respectively the epithets *significant* and *ornamental* †.

* Chap. XI.

† See the Defin. Chap. XV.

We have observed in the introductory chapters, that reading should in some things differ from speaking; and I am inclined to believe, for the following reasons, that the particular under consideration is one, which ought to vary a little in these arts.

Modulation in reading serves a two-fold purpose. At the same time that it gives pleasure to the ear on the principles of harmony, it contributes through that medium to preserve the attention. And since written language (when not purely dramatical) is in general more elegant in its construction, and musical in its periods, than the oral one; and since many interesting particulars are wanting in reading, which are present in speaking, that contribute greatly to fix the regard of the hearer, it seems
reasonable,

reasonable, in order to do justice to the language, and in part to supply the incitements of attention just alluded to, that in the former of these two articles a modulation should be used something more harmonious and artificial than in the latter. Agreeably to this reasoning, I believe we shall find every reader, on a narrow examination, adopt more or less a modulation thus ornamented : Though, after all, I must acknowledge there are better grounds to believe that the practice has been hitherto directed intuitively by nature, than that it was discovered by the inductions of reason ; and with more pleasure to find this agreement between these sovereign sisters, than inclination to enlarge upon it, I hasten to lay down what I have to add by way of rule for a modulation to be

be used in reading. “ In every thing
 “ dramatic, colloquial, or of simple
 “ narrative, let your modulation be
 “ the same as in speaking; but when
 “ the subject is flowry, solemn or dig-
 “ nified, add something to its harmony,
 “ diversify the key-note, and encrease
 “ the frequency of cadences in pro-
 “ portion to the merit of the compo-
 “ sition.”

It will readily be seen, that the precepts here drawn from a comparison between speaking and reading, would be very inadequate, were they left destitute of the assistance of *taste* and the opportunity of *frequently bearing and imitating masterly readers*. And indeed to these two great auxiliaries we might very properly have referred the whole matter at once, as capable of giving sufficient directions,

directions, had we not remembered, that our plan required us to found several of our rules as much on the principles of a philosophical analysis, as on those more familiar ones, which will be found of greater efficacy in real practice.



CHAPTER

The Ninth.

EXPRESSION,

First, as to the Tones of the Voice.

THERE is no composition in music, however perfect as to key and melody, but, in order to do justice to the subject and ideas of the author, will require in the performing something more than an exact adherence to *tune and time*. This something is of a nature too, which perhaps can never be adequately pointed out by any thing graphic, and results intirely from the taste and feeling of the performer. It is that which chiefly gives music its

G power

power over the passions, and characterises its notes with what we mean by the words *sweet, harsh, dull, lively, plaintive, joyous, &c.* ; for it is evident every sound considered abstractedly, without any regard to the movement, or high and low, may be thus modified. In practical music this commanding particular is called *Expression* ; and as we find certain tones analogous to it frequently coalescing with the modulation of the voice, which indicate our passions and affections (thereby more particularly pointing out the meaning of what we say) the term is usually applied in the same sense to speaking and reading.

These tones are not altogether peculiar to man. Every animal, that is not dumb, has a power of making several of them. And from their being able, un-

assisted

affisted by words, to manifest and raise their kindred emotions, they constitute a kind of language of themselves. In this language of the heart man is eminently conversant ; for we not only understand it in one another, but also in many of the inferior creatures subjected by providence to our service.

The expression here illustrated is one of the most essential articles in good reading, since it not only gives a finishing to the sense, but on the principles of sympathy and antipathy, has also a peculiar efficacy in interesting the heart. It is likewise an article of the most difficult attainment, as it appears from what follows, that a masterly reader ought not only to be able to incorporate it with the modulation properly as

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to *quality*, but in any degree as to *quantity*.

Every thing written being a proper imitation of speech, expressive reading must occasionally partake of all its tones. But from what was said in the introductory chapters of the difference between reading and speaking, it follows, that these signs of the emotions should be less strongly characterized in the former article than in the latter. Again; as several of these tones of expression are in themselves agreeable to the mind, and raise in us agreeable emotions (as those of *pity*, *benevolence*, or whatever indicates *happiness*, and *goodness* of heart) and others disagreeable (as those of a *boisterous*, *malevolent*, and *depraved* nature, &c.) it farther appears, since read-
ing

ing is an art *improving* and not *imitating* nature*, that in whatever degree we abate the expressiveness of the tones above alluded to in the first case, it would be eligible to make a greater abatement in the latter. But as to the quantities and proportional magnitudes of these abatements, they, like many other particulars of the same nature, must be left solely to the taste and judgment of the reader.

To add one more remark, which may be of service on more accounts than in suggesting another reason for the doctrine above. Let it be remembered, that though in order to acquit himself agreeably in this article of expression, it will be necessary every reader should

* See Chap. XII.

feel his subject as well as *understand* it, yet, that he may preserve a proper ease and masterliness of delivery, it is also necessary he should guard against discovering too much emotion and perturbation.

From this reasoning we deduce the following rule for the tones, which indicate the passions and emotions,

“ In reading, let all your tones of
 “ expression be borrowed from those of
 “ common speech, but something more
 “ faintly characterized. Let those
 “ tones, which signify any disagreeable
 “ passion of the mind, be still more
 “ faint than those, which indicate
 “ their contrary ; and preserve yourself
 “ so far from being affected with the
 “ subject, as to be able to proceed
 “ through

“ through it with that peculiar kind of
 “ ease and masterliness, which has its
 “ charms in this, as well as every other
 “ art.”

I shall conclude this chapter with the following observation, which relates to speaking as well as reading. When words fall in our way, whose “ sound
 “ seem an echo to the sense,” as *squir*, *buzz*, *bum*, *rattle*, *biss*, *jarr*, &c. we ought not to pronounce them in such a manner, as to heighten the imitation, except in light and ludicrous subjects. For instance, they should not in any other case be sounded *squir.r.r—buzz.z.z—bum.m.m—r.r.rattle*, &c. On the contrary, when the imitation lies in the movement, or flow and structure of a whole passage (which frequently happens in

poetry *) the delivery may always be allowed to give a heightening to it with the greatest propriety ; as in the following instances, out of a number more, which every experienced reader will quickly recollect.

In these deep solitudes and awful cells,
Where heav'nly-pensive Contemplation dwells,
And ever-musing Melancholy reigns—

Pope's Eloisa to Abelard.

With easy course
 The vessels glide, unless their speed be stopp'd
By dead calms, that oft lie on these smooth seas.

Dyer's Fleece.

* On the nature and use of this embellishment, see a little work lately published, called *Observations on the Correspondence between Poetry and Music*, which appears to the author of this tract a highly finished specimen of literary taste and philosophical criticism.

Softly

*Softly sweet in Lydian measure,
Soon he sooth'd her soul to pleasure.*

Dryden's Ode on St. Cecilia's day.

Still gathering force it smoaks, and, urg'd amain,
Whirls, leaps, and thunders down impetuous to
the plain. *Pope's Iliad. B. 13.*

For who to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being ere resign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the chearful day,
Nor cast *one longing ling'ring look behind?*
Grey's Elegy.



CHAPTER

The Tenth,

EXPRESSION, *Secondly, as to face
and gesture.*

BESIDES the particular tones and modifications of voice above described, which always accompany and express our inward agitations, nature has in these cases endowed us with another language, which instead of the ear, addresses itself to the eye, thereby giving the communications of the heart a double advantage over those of the understanding, and us a double chance to preserve so inestimable a blessing. This language is what arises from the different, almost involuntary movements
and

and configurations of the face and body in our emotions and passions, and which, like that of tones, every one is formed to understand by a kind of intuition.

When men are in any violent agitation of mind, this co-operating *Expression* (as it is called) of face and gesture is very strongly marked, and totally free from the mixture of any thing, which has a regard to gracefulness or what appearance they may make in the eyes of others. But in ordinary conversation, and where the emotions are not so warm, fashionable people are perpetually insinuating, into their countenance and action, whatever they imagine will add to the ease and elegance of their deportment, or impress on the spectator an idea of their amiableness and breeding.

ing. Now though the above-mentioned natural organical signs of the emotions should accompany every thing spoken, yet from what was observed in the introductory chapters (like the tones we have just treated upon) they should in reading be much less strongly expressed, and those suffer the greatest diminution, that are in themselves the most ungainly. And as it was in the last chapter recommended to the reader to preserve himself as far from being affected in all passionate subjects, as to be able to keep a temperate command over the various affections of the voice, &c.; so under the sanction of this subordinate feeling he may accompany his delivery more frequently with any easy action or change of face, which will contribute to set off his manner,

manner, and make it agreeable on the principles of art.

As these calm decorations of action (as I may call them) are not altogether natural, but have their rise from a kind of institution *, they must be modeled by the practices of the polite. And though mankind differ from one another scarce more in any particular, than in that of talents for adopting the graceful actions of the body, and hence nothing determinate can be said of their nature and frequency, yet even those, most

* Besides the natural signs, we have many in use that are instituted (such as the various ones of salutation, &c.) which may be easily recollected.—A word on the practices of the antients will be found in Chapter XIII. And should the reader be desirous of seeing these kinds of subjects treated at large, he may meet with satisfaction from the *Abbes de Cendillac and du Bos*.

happily

happily calculated to acquit themselves well in their use, might profit by considering it is better greatly to abridge the display, than to over-do it ever so little. For the peculiar modesty of deportment, with which the inhabitants of this kingdom are endowed, makes us in common endeavour to suppress many signs of an agitated mind ; and in such cases the bodily ones in particular are very sparingly used. We have also a natural and rooted dislike to any kind of affectation, and to no species, that I can recollect, a greater, than to that, which is seen in a person, who pretends to mimicry and courtly gesture, without possessing the advantages and talents they require, and of which not many people comparatively speaking have any remarkable share.

The

The inference of this is too obvious to need drawing out, and I would particularly recommend it to the consideration of those readers, who think the common occurrences of a news-paper, &c. cannot be properly delivered without a good deal of elbow-room.

Although it is impossible to come to particulars in any directions of this kind, yet there is one article of our present subject, on which a serviceable remark may be made. In ordinary discourse, when we are particularly pressing and earnest in what we say, the eye is naturally thrown upon those, to whom we address ourselves. And in reading, a turn of this organ now and then upon the hearers, when any thing very remarkable or interesting falls in the way, has a good effect in gaining it

it a proper attention, &c. But this should not be too frequently used; for if so, besides its having a tendency to confound the natural importance of different passages, it may not be altogether agreeable to some to have their own reflexions broke in upon by a signal, which might be interpreted to hint at their wanting regulation.

One observation more, and then I shall attempt to recapitulate the substance of this chapter in the form of a precept. Though it is, when strictly examined, inconsistent, both in speaking and reading, to imitate with action what we are describing, yet as in any thing *comic* such a practice may suggest ideas, that will *accord* with those of the subject, it may there be now and then

then indulged in either of these articles*.

The Rule for Action, &c. in Reading.

“ In a manner, similar to that directed
 “ with regard to tones, moderate your
 “ bodily expressions of the signs of the
 “ emotions. And in order to supply,
 “ as it were, this deficiency, introduce
 “ into your carriage such an easy grace-
 “ fulness, as may be consistent with
 “ your acquirements in these particu-
 “ lars, and the necessary dread, which
 “ should ever be present of falling into
 “ any kind of affectation or gri-
 “ mace.”

* See Quintilian, Chap. III. Book XI.

C H A P T E R

The Eleventh.

P A U S E S.

SPEECH consisting of a succession of distinct words, must naturally be liable [both from a kind of accident, and a difficulty there may be in beginning certain sounds or portions of phrases immediately on the ending of certain others] to several small intermissions of voice; of which, as they can have no meaning, nothing farther need here be said. There are, however, some pauses, which the sense necessarily demands, and to these the substance of this chapter is directed.

These

These pauses are in part to distinguish the members of sentences from one another, the terminations of complete periods, and to afford an opportunity for taking the breath. Besides this, they have a very graceful effect in the modulation, on the same account they are so essential to music.—In both articles, like blank spaces in pictures, they set off and render more conspicuous whatsoever they disjoin or terminate.

Were language made up of nothing but short colloquial sentences, these pauses, though they might do no harm, and would generally be graceful, would however be superseded as to use by the completeness and *narrowness*, as I may say, of the meaning. But in more diffuse language, composed of several detached sentences, and which requires

some degree of attention in order to take in the sense, the intermissions of voice under consideration are of the greatest service, by signifying to the mind the progress and completion of the whole passage. Now though in extensive and differently formed periods there may be members whose completeness of sense might be conceived of various degrees, and hence might seem to require a set of pauses equally numerous; yet, since the sense does not altogether depend upon these intermissions, and their ratios to one another, if capable of being properly defined, could not be accurately observed, grammarians have ventured to conceive the whole class of pauses as reducible to the four or five kinds now in use, and whose

marks

marks and ratios are well known *; presuming that under the eye of taste, and with the assistance of a particular to be next mentioned, they would not fail in all cases to suggest intermissions

* Supposing the *comma* (,) one time, the *semi-colon* (;) will be two; the *colon* (:) three, and the *period* (.) as also the marks of *interrogation* (?) and *admiration* (!) four of these times. The blank line (— or ---) and the *breaks* between *paragraphs* intimate still greater times, and by the same analogy may be reckoned a double and quadruple period respectively. Now and then these blank lines are placed immediately *after* the ordinary points, and then they are conceived only as separating for the *eye* the different natures of the matter;—as a question from an answer;—precept from example;—premises from inferences, &c. in which case their import is evident. But of late some authors have not scrupled to confound these distinctions, and to make a blank serve for all the pauses universally, or the mark of an indefinite rest, the quantity of which is left to the determination of the reader's taste. A practice, I should imagine, too destructive of the intended precision of these typical notices to see it much longer adopted.

of voice suitable to the sense. But in many of these extensive and complex periods rounded with a kind of redundancy of matter, where the full sense is long suspended, and the final words are not very important, there would be some hazard of a misapprehension of the termination, had we not more evident and infallible notice of it, than that which is given by the pause. This notice is the *cadence*, referred to in the chapter on modulation; which, as is there observed, besides the ornamental variety it affords, appears from these remarks to be a very necessary and serviceable article in perspicuous delivery.

As this cadence naturally accompanies the end of every intire sense, circumstanced as above-mentioned, it
may

may sometimes fall before the *femicolon*, but more generally before the *colon*, as well as the period : For these marks are often found to terminate a complete sense, and in these cases the relation what follows has to what went before is signified to the mind by the relative shortness of the stop, and the form of introducing the additional matter. Nor can any bad consequence arise from thus founding distinctions on ratios of time, which it may be said are too nice to be often rightly hit upon ; for if a confusion should happen between that of the *colon* and *period*, there is perhaps so trifling a difference between the nature of the passages they succeed, as to make a small inaccuracy of no consequence. And as to the rests of the *femicolon* and *period*, it will not be

easy to mistake about them, as their ratio is that of two to one. Add to this the power, which the matter and introduction of the subsequent passages have to rectify any slight error here made, and we shall be fully satisfied, that the pauses, as usually explained, with the cadence above described, and a proper knowledge of the language, will convey sufficient information to the understanding of the constructive nature of the passages, after which they are found.

As this account of the pauses, &c. differs something from that given in the *Lectures on Elocution*, I shall next briefly mention it, and add a word or two by way of reply.

Here in short it is supposed, that in natural delivery, not only the full stops,
but

but all the various subordinate ones are preceded and *indicated* by a kind of tone *. These the author says by a *short cut* are by our masters in reading, for the most part, absurdly reduced to two, that are *artificial*; “ One, which
 “ marks that the sense is not com-
 “ pleted, and another which shews that
 “ the sentence is closed.” As the subject is of no great importance, I shall little more than barely mention my opinion of the tones preceding pauses in general, without advancing all, that might be urged in its support. First then, I am inclined to believe we have no tones in reading purely to *indicate* that a sentence is unfinished; as a pause short of the length of a period, and

* See *Lectures on Elocution*, pages 16, 76, and 109.

without

without being led in by the cadence, sufficiently marks the incompleteness in all cases. And if we try by the ear to discover this tone, by supposing a sentence lengthened with two or three more words, which would follow naturally from a slight turn of the phrase, we shall find that the last word of the original phrase will have in both cases exactly the same tone *.

Secondly,

* Thus in the following sentence,

That sorrow which dictates no *caution*, that
fear which does not quicken our *escape*,
that austerity which fails to *rectify* our
affections, are vain and unavailing.

Rambler.

if we make a few alterations, so as to bring different words before the commas, and write it in this manner —

That sorrow which dictates no *caution* in
our actions, that fear which does not
quicken

Secondly, I am induced to think, that the tones which immediately precede all pauses in natural speech, except that of the full stop, are nothing more than those expressive ones taken notice of Chapter the Tenth, which are naturally annexed to the modulation, and arise, as it were, from a bare *section* of this compound thread, not from an intended artful preparation to signify its termination †.

But

quicken our *escape* from evil, that austerity which fails to *rectify*, are vain and unavailing.

I think it will be pretty obvious, that in both cases the corresponding words are delivered precisely in the same manner.

† The author of the above-named work intimates (p. 78.) that the tones preceding the pauses should be exceeding numerous, and if the account we have just given of them be true, there

But to return from these nicer disquisitions to what is more obvious and perhaps may be of more service.

It may be observed that in natural speech according to the warmth and agitation of the speaker, the rests are often short and injudiciously proportioned, and hence that every thing thus delivered cannot be so graceful as it

there must arise a variety sufficiently great indeed. But will not this multiplicity of *tones*, and the very delicate variations they must have one from another, make them (if we suppose them determined *by* and necessary *to* the sense) as difficult to execute properly as the relative *times* of the pauses, which in p. 76. he justly enough considers scarce practicable? From the defect here suggested of his account of tones preceding pauses, and what is observed in the text and note above, we infer, that it is small rests, assisted by the sense *alone*, that signify to the mind the end of these less constructive parts of sentences.

might

might have been from a proper attention to their magnitude and effects.

Pauses then, though chiefly subjected to the sense, are, as was remarked at the outset, serviceable in beautifying the modulation, &c.—And since books are often inaccurately printed as to points, and people's tastes differ some little about their place and value, it appears that, “ Although in reading
“ great attention should be paid to the
“ stops, yet a greater should be given
“ to the sense, and their correspondent
“ times occasionally lengthened beyond
“ what is usual in common speech;” which observation contains all that we shall pretend to lay down by way of rule for the management of pauses in the delivery of written language.

CHAPTER

The Twelfth.

*Of the deviations which Art frequently
makes from Nature.*

THE better to satisfy the less experienced reader that the occasional heightnings and depressions, mentioned under two or three of the foregoing heads, are not without the sanction of precedent, we have thought proper to insert this chapter ; in which a few examples for that purpose will be enumerated.

But introductory to this it will be expedient to consider more particularly, than we have yet done, what kind of an art that of reading is, and the classes
into

into which all its kindred arts may be divided. Now all arts, not barely mechanical, and whose performances are capable of yielding an elegant pleasure, may be arranged under two heads, *viz.* arts *imitating* nature, and arts *improving* nature. Of the first sort is *painting, statuary, &c.* * where the chief pleasure we receive is allowed to arise from the resemblance the copy has to the original, and where it may be observed, that the medium, through which the imitation is made, is different to that of the prototype. Of the second kind is *music, dancing, gardening, &c.* where the plea-

* *Poetry*, though it may be considered as a species of *imitation* in *description*, is omitted here, because it has two other sources of pleasure, very little connected with any thing *mimetic*; I mean the beauties of *sentiment*, and the harmony of *numbers* considered abstractedly.

sure

ture received flows principally from a *beautiful* arrangement, and *artful* improvement of the simple natural elements, of which these articles respectively consist. Now polite speaking is evidently an art of the latter kind, as it considers how to improve and render more agreeable the constituent principles of speech, as they discover themselves in simple nature. And as we shall find on the experiment, that reading does not receive any of its beauties from the principles of *imitation*, being no *copy*, but only *another kind* of speech under the influence of certain circumstances equally natural to us, it follows, that reading, as well as speaking, is an art, which classes under those of *improving* nature.

After

After having formed these distinctions, we may farther remark, that though in the species of art first mentioned, the chief pleasure arises from imitation, yet it does not wholly exclude the advantages, that are afforded by the other. For of independent articles we may evidently adopt which we please; and when the arrangement is fixed by nature in a single object, it is equally evident, that every component part may be heightened and improved a little in its characteristic beauty, without interfering in the least with the leading idea of imitation contained in the whole assemblage.

Examples illustrating these general observations may be found in some part or other of what follows.

In a man, long well-made legs and thighs are found to add greatly to the majesty of his person ; the delicacy of a woman is acknowledged to be improved by small hands and feet ; and in a horse, under the management of its rider, a fine rainbow curve of the neck is allowed to be as expressive of fire as it is necessary to beauty. Hence painters never fail of placing their heroes upon horses which have this attribute in a striking degree ; while (if I am not mistaken) the feet and hands of the *Venus de Medicis* are comparatively smaller, and (according to Hogarth *) the legs and thighs of the *Apollo of Belvedere* are comparatively longer than

* See his Analysis of Beauty.

perhaps

perhaps they are ever to be found in living examples.

Again : When through misfortune, or on any other account, our peace of mind is disturbed, the countenance is generally graver and the pace something slower than usual, the head declined, and the whole deportment of body very free from any thing of *parade* or light *affectation*. These particulars are soon discovered, and accordingly with the greatest propriety heightened and adopted into the very slow movement, grave and simple demeanour used in funeral processions. On the contrary, when the mind is seized with a fit of gaiety, it manifests itself by a cheerfulness of countenance joined to several active and fanciful gesticulations ; and hence by the same law are derived the sprightly

movements of the jig and other enlivening dances. Farther, in any thing important, the face assumes the expression of dignity, the walk is solemn and firm, the body more erect than common, and an *affected* majesty thrown into the whole demeanour. From these particulars are derived, according to their nature, the peculiar carriage adapted to dignified processions, and the slow majestic movement of the minuet*.

It

* There is no art, but that of the *imitative* kind founded (in the manner we have been describing) upon any thing disagreeable in itself. And the reason why ought of this kind has a place in it is, because the pleasure arising from the circumstance of imitation barely, is in general much greater, than any disgust the original object may raise; and hence the practice is authorised. Hence also, in all instances of improving nature, and where imitation is out of the question.

It is to be observed however (agreeably to what was just hinted Chapter the Fourth) that in some deviations from nature, there is great caution to be used for fear of carrying the practice too far, and that Taste and Judgment are the sole directors concerning their magnitude. Where a proportion of these qualifications is wanting, some disagreeable excess is commonly the consequence, and when it so happens, this excess, as is well known, is in poetry called *bombast*, on the stage *over-acting*, in painting *caricatura*, and in general, whatever be the subject, it

question, if our desire be to accomplish the agreeable, and as much of it as possible, it must be an essential rule to omit where it can be done, and lower, where it cannot, whatever is connected with the subject that is disagreeable.

may be termed an unwarrantable *distortion*.

But to return to the particular more immediately before us. These instances (among a number of others which every reader's observation will readily suggest to him) make it pretty evident, that the principles of heightning and depression under consideration are at least tacitly authorised by the professors of every polite art. And since there is something in them analogous to the unusual delay upon unaccented syllables in theatric declamation mentioned Chapter Fourth, the encreased melody of the modulation in flowery and dignified language, spoken of Chapter Eighth, and the unequal depressions of the agreeable and disagreeable signs of the emotions,

emotions, recommended in Chapters Ninth and Tenth, it is hoped, when to the reasons already given under the said heads, we have added the sanction of these instances, and considered the analogy there must be in the practice of all similar arts, it is hoped, I say, that the deviations just enumerated will be thought amply supported and justified.



CHAPTER

The Thirteenth.

*Concerning permanent Marks in Written
Language for the various Affections of
Voice, Gesture, &c.*

FROM the similitude the modulation of the voice in delivery has to music, and what is recorded of the practice of the ancients, it has been thought by several ingenious men, that great improvement might be made in our reciting and reading, were their modulation directed by certain notes or signatures of a musical kind.—On this subject I shall remark what follows.

In a preceding note we have observed, that the modulation of the ancients was
strictly

strictly musical, and therefore might with like ease and efficacy be represented *by* and learned *from* musical characters. But if our account of speech given Chapter Seventh be true, it will readily be granted by any one, who duly considers the subject, that the modulation now in use consists chiefly of a succession of such restless inflexions of voice, through the smallest part of a note, as can by no means be suggested by the notes of a musical scale. But allowing this, it may perhaps be asked, If other marks could not be invented *, which from taking in certain portions or *formulas* (as they might be called)

* Similar to those we will imagine of *Mons. Feuillé*, for the stops and movements used in dancing.

of the above-named inflexions, and with the assistance of the voice, might in a traditionary manner fully communicate them? And if such a device would not be of real service to the arts of reading and speaking? I answer, that although something of this kind is not impossible to be done, yet I doubt it would take up so much time and application to bring it to any tolerable degree of simplicity, as must leave us very little hope of its ever being perfected. And though a degree of *certainty*, *novelty*, and even *propriety* might thus be given to modulation, which it now wants, yet in the application of such delicate transitions of voice and slightly characterized formulas, as those marks must represent, it is probable there would arise a stiffness

ness and want of address, which would more than counter-balance any of their good effects.

Besides our having no characters for modulation, it has also been matter of complaint, that we have not signs for gesture, the expressions of face and voice, and the other accessories of natural delivery *.

That the ancients had marks for their gesture in reciting and declamation of the theatre is notorious. But, like their modulation, it was greatly heightened above nature, full of instituted signs, and even so violent as to require a man's whole strength ; hence might be taught in a manner similar to the steps and movements of dancing. While

* See *Lectures on Elocution*, [p. 10, 11. 14.]

ours, from being very little varied, seldom marked with any thing violent, and copied chiefly after nature, does not seem either to require or admit of being reduced to the formal rules of science †.

As to expression of face, no nation has ever been whimsical enough to attempt reducing it to signatures. And whether the antients had any regard to or fixed rules for the tones expressive of the emotions, does not clearly appear. However, as far as the *formulas* for modulation before-mentioned seem practi-

† If the reader would chuse to see this subject more fully descanted upon, and have an ample view of the *prosody, delivery, and gesticulation* of the *Greeks and Romans*, he may meet with it in Chapters IV. and VI. of Sect. I. Part II. of the *Abbe de Condillac's ingenious Essay on the Origin of the Human Understanding.*

cable,

cable, so far might these expressive tones have a place, as they might be conceived to enter into, and make part of every such *formula*.

It appears then, that, as matters now stand, fully to represent to the eye, and unerringly to suggest to the mind every affection and peculiarity of voice and gesture in reading and speaking by any graphic device, must be deemed nearly impossible, on account of the indefinite variety, which nature delights to display in these provinces. And a plan to reduce them to any thing more artificial and less perplexed, by a select and established set of marks, would be more likely to flatter in the closet, than either answer in practice, or appear before the public, otherwise than as a specimen of utopian ingenuity.

In

In fine ; without looking at the subject in any different light, than this we have placed it in, and enumerating other objections, to which it is farther liable, we may undoubtedly conclude, that as we found it best in *emphasis* and *pauses* not to aim at perfect accuracy in their marks, but to leave a *great deal* concerning them to the judgement and experience of the reader, so with regard to *modulation, gesture, expression, &c.* a *total* dependence on these favourite mistresses will probably ever be the most eligible method either of attaining or improving their respective beauties.

CHAPTER

*The Fourteenth.**Of the Nature and Properties of Written
Language, &c.*

SINCE in ordinary speech it is through the medium of a proper and grammatical construction of words, whose meanings are established by custom, that we convey our ideas to one another, *written language*, which professedly typifies these grammatical constructions, must, as far as bare words can extend, have every property of the *oral* one. Perhaps we need not stop here, but if we include what it may *suggest* as well as directly *communicate*, assert it to be in every respect as copious and

and significant :—That is, written language, in the same manner as speech, must have a power to affect the *fancy*, the *judgement*, and the *passions*.

It may be remarked, however, with respect to the last of these three articles, the *passions*, that there is but one instance in which the more violent and personal kinds of *love*, *hatred*, *anger*, *revenge*, &c. can be raised in us by written language, and that is in the case of ordinary letters, controversy, and the like literary altercation. And as books in general are published to the world at large, on subjects no way personally interesting to the reader, and by authors frequently unknown, they may therefore, according to their *general* intent, be said to be incapable of raising in us any other emotions, than those of
sympathy,

sympathy, antipathy, and affections of the *lighter* kind *.

We may infer then from the doctrine above (what indeed every person's experience must have most evidently proved) that books will easily convey whatever is preceptive and historical, and raise in us all the tribe of sympathetic emotions, and that they are hence eminently fitted to instruct and amuse, to improve our rational faculties and mend our hearts.

Now publications concerning religion, morality, any event, art, or science, are generally written in a style subjected to an idea of a *common* language, as it were, that is to say, every characteristic oddity or manner which

* This will be found farther to confirm what is advanced in the introductory chapters.

marks the discourse of individuals, and by which their phraseology may be known from most other persons, is as much as possible avoided by their authors ;—the genuine beauties of composition, and a pure and fashionable diction being perpetually in their view. By the great quantity of books, which the art of printing has now thrown into every person's hands, we are soon acquainted with this our *mother* tongue, as it may properly be called, and become so quick and perfect in apprehending its meaning, that scarce any impediment of delivery can obstruct its passage to the understanding. In a downright *monotony* from a whisper to plain bawling the sense is far from being obscure ; all the leaps, windings, and breaks of music are unable to de-
face

face it, while the most *untoward* and *preposterous* modulation we ever meet with cannot always confound it past comprehension. Nay so highly significant is a written language thus formed, that we find it does not at all require the aid of articulation; since a book must be very well read to yield us more pleasure, than results from a silent perusal*.

As

* From the words and phrases of *oral* language always necessarily appearing associated with expressive tones and a fashionable modulation, both the author of *written language* and the silent peruser of it must have a secret reference all along to these particulars. And since, as to any thing which relates to sound, every one, however happily qualified, will find it much easier to conceive than execute, the silent reader who instinctively, as it were, carries on the tones and modulation perhaps little short of perfect accuracy, cannot often meet with a person who will deliver the matter in a manner, which will either coin-

As there are two or three species of writing, which have something singular in them, and with regard to the manner in which they should be read, a few *particular* remarks seem necessarily required, I shall conclude this chapter with laying them before the reader.—
And first of

PLAYS and such like CONVERSATION
PIECES. Writings of this kind may

cide with his ideas, or indeed be free from many real and considerable imperfections.—Hence the preference often due to a silent perusal. But though one, who reads aloud, may according to the opinion of the hearer, frequently err in his manner, yet, since he may perhaps also as frequently discover beauties, which were beyond his conception, there can be nothing said, in certain cases, of the real preference, which ought to be given to either of the two methods of reading under consideration, with regard to the pleasure they yield or their effects upon the understanding.

be considered as intended for two different purposes; one to unfold subject-matter for the exercise of theatric powers, and the other to convey amusement, merely as fable replete with pleasing incidents and characteristic manners. Hence there appears to be great latitude for the display of a *consistent* delivery of these performances: For while, on one hand, a good reader of very inferior talents for mimicry may be heard with a tolerable degree of pleasure; on the other, if any person is qualified to give a higher degree of life and force to the dialogue and characters by delivering them as an actor, he must be fully at liberty to start from the confinement of a chair to a posture and area more suited to his abilities, and, if he be not deceived in himself, his

hearers will be considerable gainers by the change.—The next article is

SERMONS or other ORATIONS, which in like manner may be conceived intended for a double purpose. First as matter for the display of oratorical powers, and secondly, as persuasive discourses, &c. which may be read like any other book. Therefore it appears (for reasons similar to those above) that according as clergymen are possessed of the talents of elocution, they may consistently either rehearse their sermons, in the manner of an extemporary harangue, or deliver them in the more humble capacity of one, who is content to entertain and instruct his hearers with reading to them his own or some other person's written discourse.

That

That either of these manners of delivery (or a mixture of them) in either of the cases above-mentioned is agreeable, we find on a careful examination. For this will shew us how frequently they run into one another, and that we are so far from thinking such transitions wrong, that, without a particular attention that way, we scarce ever perceive them at all.

POETRY is the next and last object of our present remarks. This is a very peculiar kind of writing, and as much different from the language of ordinary discourse (if I may be allowed the comparison) as the movements of the dance are from common walking. To ornament and improve whatever is subservient to the pleasures and amusements of life is the delight of human nature.

We are also pleased with a kind of *excess* in any thing, which has a power to amuse the fancy, inspire us with enthusiasm, or awaken the soul to a consciousness of its own importance and dignity. Hence one pleasure, at least, takes its rise, that we feel in contemplating the performances of every art, and hence the language of poetry, consisting of a measured rythmus, harmonious cadences, and an elevated picturesque diction, has been studied by the ingenious, and found to have a powerful influence over the human breast in every age and region. There is such an affinity between this language and music, that they were in the earlier ages never separated; and though modern refinement has in a great measure destroyed this union, yet it is with some degree

degree of difficulty in rehearsing these divine compositions we can forget the singing of the muse.

From these considerations (and some kindred ones mentioned in Chapter Eighth) in repeating verses, they are generally accompanied with a modulation rather more ornamented and musical than is used in any other kind of writing. And accordingly, as there seems to be the greatest propriety in the practice, the rule for this particular in the Chapter just referred to, will allow any latitude in it that can gain the sanction of taste and pleasure.

Rhymes in the lighter and more soothing provinces of poetry are found to have a good effect, and hence (for reasons

sons like those just suggested) it is certainly absurd to endeavour to smother them by a feeble pronunciation and running one line precipitately into another, as is often affected to be done by many of our modern readers and speakers. By this method they not only destroy one source of pleasure intended by the composer (which though not great is nevertheless genuine) but even often supply its place with what is really disagreeable, by making the rhymes, as they are interruptedly perceived, appear accidental blemishes of a different style, arising from an unmeaning recurrence of similar sounds. With regard then to reading verses terminated with rhyme, the common rule, which directs to pronounce the final words

words *full*, and to distinguish them by a slight pause even when there is none required by the sense, seems the most rational and consequently most worthy of being followed.



CHAPTER

*The Fifteenth.**Reading Defined.*

HAVING in some part or other of the foregoing chapters inserted the chief of what has occurred on the theory and practice of delivering written language, we shall next endeavour to give a summary view of our conclusions in the form of a definition, as follows.

Reading IS THE ART OF DELIVERING WRITTEN LANGUAGE WITH *propriety, force, AND elegance.* WHERE (AS IN SPEAKING) THE PRONUNCIATION OF THE WORDS IS COPIED
AFTER

AFTER THE POLITE AND LEARNED OF OUR COUNTRY, ⁽²⁾AND THE EMPHASIS OF SENSE, THE PAUSES, AND SIGNIFICANT CADENCES ARE DETERMINED BY THE MEANING OF WHAT IS BEFORE US. ⁽³⁾WHERE THE MODULATION IS BORROWED FROM FASHIONABLE SPEECH, BUT A LITTLE IMPROVED AND HEIGHTENED IN PROPORTION TO THE BEAUTY AND HARMONY OF THE COMPOSITION. ⁽⁴⁾WHERE ALL THE SIGNS OF THE EMOTIONS ARE IN *quality* THE SAME AS THEY WOULD FLOW SPONTANEOUSLY FROM NATURE, BUT ABATED SOMETHING IN *quantity*, AND THOSE MOST, WHICH ARE IN THEMSELVES OF THE DISAGREEABLE KIND. ⁽⁵⁾WHERE THE EMPHASIS OF FORCE, ORNAMENTAL CADENCES,

142 THE ART OF DELIVERING
CADENCES, THE QUANTITY OF
THE ABOVE-NAMED VARIATIONS
FROM NATURAL SPEECH, AND SOME
OTHER LESS MATERIAL PARTICU-
LARS, ARE DIRECTED BY TASTE
AND CUSTOM; ⁶AND (LASTLY)
WHERE AFFECTATION OF EVERY
SORT IS TO BE DREADED AS THE
GREATEST BLEMISH, ⁷AND WHERE
EASE, MASTERLINESS AND GE-
NUINE GRACE ARE CONSIDERED
AS PRINCIPAL BEAUTIES, AND THE
PROPER SUBSTITUTES FOR THE IN-
FERIOR DEGREE OF WARMTH AND
ENERGY, WHICH THE DELIVERY OF
WRITTEN LANGUAGE OUGHT AL-
WAYS TO DISCOVER, WHEN COM-
PARED WITH THE EXTEMPORARY
EFFUSIONS OF THE HEART.

CHAPTER

The Sixteenth.

(By Way of Appendix.)

Of the Methods and Precautions to be observed in learning to read.

AS it would take up too much room to enter minutely into this subject, and in this, as in every other branch of education, minds differently circumstanced must require different treatment, I shall reduce what has occurred to me upon it to two or three precepts, which I judge, if observed, would be of great and general advantage.

Did

Did not the language of books differ on the whole very much from the ordinary colloquial one, the art of reading would be of much easier attainment than we find it to be. For in that case, a scholar would in learning to read find already at his tongue's end, as I may literally say, a fashionable modulation associated with the proper tones of expression for every passage before him; which with a little practice, he would be able to apply with due masterliness and propriety. But since the former of these languages consists of more complicated periods and less familiar phraseology than the latter, and for which common speech cannot have furnished him with the proper accessories of delivery, the attainment of them must require

quire a good deal of time ; and this not only on account of the practice it will require, but also on account of the comparative seldomness, that we hear the language of books properly delivered.

From these considerations, after a learner had got to read pretty fluently and been a little acquainted with written language, I would advise, that what he repeated with a design to improve his delivery should be for a while rather from memory than a sight of the letter, as in the former case by comprehending the full meaning of every sentence, he would stand a much greater chance to give them their proper modulation, &c. than in the latter.—In the execution of this plan, it will be necessary to begin with such speci-

L mens

mens of written language, as are nearest akin to common speech in the phraseology, and to proceed regularly to the more difficult and unusual ; leaving *poetry* of all kinds to the last, as a species of writing, which from its natural harmony, &c. is apt to lead the inexperienced into a modulation too affected for any ears but their own. Preparative also to these exercises it would be advisable for the master to read over properly to the scholar what he is to repeat ; as in most arts, and more especially in this, example will be of infinitely greater service to youth, than the most accurate and copious lectures on the theory.

Now although the flexibility of voice, limbs, &c. and talents of imitation which young people are endued with,
will

will very soon, under proper instruction, make them masters of a fashionable modulation, and the various tones and even organical signs of expression, yet it is impossible to arrive at the perfection they are capable of (or indeed to any great perfection) till they are possessed of a good share of *taste* and *feeling*; which two articles (especially the former) do not shew themselves in any material degree, till we are entering upon the years of manhood. Therefore while these capital assistants are growing to maturity, I would next recommend, as a practice of the last importance and efficacy, that the pupil read something aloud every day in his chamber. For from the unreservedness which such a private situation will give him, the various trials he may

make on the same passage, the instructing *excesses*, as I may call them, naturally indulged in experiments of this kind, and the dexterity which frequent practice always brings along with it, he cannot fail by proper perseverance of mastering what he had in view, as far as his natural talents will allow *.

What

* Though some people are so happily qualified by nature as to excel perhaps in reading the greatest part of the various kinds of writing, yet in general they have their *fortè*, and fail a good deal in the rest ;—some only shining in *gay* and *humourous* subjects, others in the *solemn* and *majestic*, and others again in the *tender* and *plaintive*, &c. But it is lucky enough that the most common and generally entertaining books (as of *religion*, *science*, *history*, &c.) are of a kind which require only such abilities in delivering as are in the possession of almost every one. However, whether the limitation of talents just mentioned be his own lot every reader would do well to consider, and if it prove so, he may infer something from

What is said above is on a supposition, that the scholar has the advantage of being educated in a fashionable part of the world, and under the care of a master, who is himself a good reader. Where this is not the case, as frequently happens, and the pupil is designed for some profession, in which a superior masterliness in reading must of course be expected, it perhaps would be to his advantage were he not to study reading aloud at all, till he was thrown into some more favourable soil for the cultivation of the arts, and his taste polished with a more extensive intercourse with the world. For certainly there is nothing more difficult than to unlearn

from the discovery, which cannot fail of being useful to him, at least, in all cases where he would be tempted voluntarily to offer his service.

bad

bad habits, and without doubt, by a careful attention to good examples, and a frequent use of the chamber practice above-recommended, a proper method of reading may be pretty soon acquired in any of the earlier stages of life.

It has been the wish of many who love letters, that some public institution should take place for the general improvement of speaking and reading. But as this is not likely to be set on foot very soon, and numbers of our clergy are bred and educated in the depths of rural rusticity, I have thrown out the hints of the last paragraph in hopes they may suggest a few serviceable considerations to scholars thus circumstanced. For as they are frequently removed into the politer places, where provincial reading cants must occasion
deserved

